

lesser amount of uncoated or partially coated particles and particles of the coating material. Particles of the coating material are significantly reduced by this method.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 13 on p. 9 with the following paragraph:

--The coating method of this invention includes the steps of dissolving a coating precursor material in a solvent to form a precursor solution; optionally adding with mixing a miscible diluent to the solution to form a coating solution; adding with mixing solid particles to the coating solution or the precursor solution to form a coating slurry, with the particles surrounded with the coating solution or the precursor solution; adjusting temperature, pH and/or another parameter to discourage precipitation on the particle surface; delivering the slurry to an atomizer without separating the particles from the coating solution or the precursor solution; atomizing or spraying the slurry in the form of droplets through a drying zone to remove volatile matter from the surface of the particles, with the droplets containing at least one particle; heat- treating the coated particles; and collecting the heat-treated coated particles.--

In the claims:

Please delete claim 14 and amend claims 1,4,5,16,17 and 20 as follows: